WCB Community Initiatives & Research Program 2008

SAFE Work – A Way of Life

Established in 1997, the Community Initiatives and Research Program (CIRP) funded projects that focused on injury and disease prevention, safety in the workplace, treatment of workplace injuries, services for injured workers and scientific, medical or other issues related to workers compensation. Up to $1 million is awarded annually by the Board of Directors to fund such projects.

In 2008, the Board of Directors considered CIRP applications which addressed the following priority areas:

PREVENTION
The Workers Compensation Board (WCB) is committed to reducing the provincial injury rate and fostering a strong workplace safety and health culture in Manitoba. The WCB is seeking community-based initiatives and research projects that:

- Aim to promote safety in the workplace and reduce workplace injuries and occupational disease
- Increase the understanding of the relationship between occupational risk factors and occupational injuries and disease.

RECOVERY
The WCB promotes recovery and return to work by supporting workers' timely return to health and work. The WCB is seeking community-based initiatives and research projects that:

- Apply innovative approaches to disability management and return to work
- Evaluate disability management practices and propose practical solutions in sectors where the injury rate is high
- Add to the body of knowledge on the diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of occupational disease, musculoskeletal injuries and chronic pain.

In addition, projects which met the CIRP's overall program objectives were also considered.

The objectives of the CIRP were to:

- Promote, educate, and increase the awareness of workplace injury and illness prevention
- Achieve practical outcomes which have a positive impact on the WCB and its stakeholders
- Develop a stronger understanding and further current knowledge of workplace injuries, illnesses and disabilities
- Apply acquired knowledge to the development of new techniques to address and reduce workplace injuries, illnesses and disabilities
- Identify and promote effective return to work and rehabilitation strategies
- Evaluate initiatives to assess their impact on reducing workplace injuries, illnesses and disabilities
- Promote research towards advancing medical science where there is a link to workers compensation issues.

Since the CIRP began, the WCB has supported 126 innovative Manitoba projects aimed at achieving these goals. Approximately two thirds of the funding has supported workplace prevention, education and training initiatives. With support from the CIRP, the WCB promotes and creates a culture of safety that enhances understanding of workers compensation issues and minimizes the human and financial impact of occupational injuries and diseases.

After consulting with its stakeholders about the CIRP in 2008, the WCB replaced it with the Research and Workplace Innovation Program (RWIP) beginning in 2009.

The RWIP will make available up to $1 million each year through two streams of funding:

- Workplace-based programs that will develop, implement or evaluate innovative, practical shop-floor solutions for improving workplace health and safety
- High quality scientific research leading to a reduction in the incidence, morbidity and mortality from work-related injury and disease.

The program will continue to uphold the highest standards of merit-based evaluation of grant applications, including peer review of scientific research, diligent project monitoring and relevance to covered workers and employers.

WCB Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba
www.wcb.mb.ca

SAFE WORK
SPOT THE HAZARD
ASSESS THE RISK
FIND A SAFER WAY
EVERYDAY

2008 Approved Grants

OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE PREVENTION AND THE CO-OCCURRENCE OF WORK RELATED SKIN AND RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS AND DISEASE

Agency: ..... Dr. Linn Holness, University of Toronto
Funding: $142,064

Purpose: This study will explore the relationship between lung and skin diseases caused by occupational exposures. It will be undertaken by a multidisciplinary team with researchers from the University of Manitoba, University of Toronto and Yale University.

The objectives of the study are to determine:

- Do workers with either skin or respiratory symptoms also experience symptoms in the other system?
- Do workers with skin or respiratory symptoms receive training and do they practice both dermal and inhalation exposure prevention?
- Are workers with both skin and respiratory symptoms different from those with only skin or respiratory symptoms?

The project will address these issues by studying a cross-sectional group of workers who are seeking treatment for suspected occupational skin or lung disease. The characteristics of these workers, their work environment and work history will provide information regarding exposure prevention strategies and inform future research. The study population of workers will be drawn from a clinical population in three occupational health clinics: one in Toronto and two in Winnipeg.

ANALYSIS OF DISABILITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMMING IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR IN MANITOBA

Agency: ..... On-Site Safety and Health Management Solutions
Funding: $90,000

Purpose: This study will survey the building construction sector in Manitoba, targeting small employers (20 to 50 workers) that have attained Certificates of Recognition (COR). The utilization of disability management and return to work (RTW) practices will be examined. Gaps and barriers in programming will be identified and a pilot program will be implemented.

Employers in the building construction sector will be surveyed in Phase 1 of the study, providing a global view of disability management and RTW practices among firms in this sector. Phase 2 will involve focus groups and interviews conducted with a smaller group of firms selected from the Phase I survey results. Phase 3 will be a pilot project in three to five selected firms to implement and test the proposed recommendations derived from the analysis of the study's findings.

HOME CARE WORKER MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURY PREVENTION PROJECT

Agency: ..... Regional Health Authority – Central MB Inc.
Funding: $200,000

Purpose: This project will assist home care workers in learning and using proper patient lift and transfer handling procedures. The objectives of this project are to reduce the incidence of unsafe client handling practices and pain experienced by home care workers in lifting patients. This will ultimately reduce the number of home care workers suffering from repetitive strain injuries.

The target group is home care workers in the southern rural communities of Morden, Winkler and the surrounding rural areas under the Regional Health Authority – Central. An occupational therapist will be available to manage home care workers' concerns with their clients, observe the way they handle clients and provide corrective instruction as needed. The training and education will be based on the Safe Client Handling Program developed by the RHA. A video will also be developed and made widely available.

SAFE WORK FOR AN AGING WORKFORCE: SMALL BUSINESS INTERVENTION AND EVALUATION PROJECT

Agency: ..... Andrew R. Dolhy Ergonomics Consulting
Funding: $119,900

Purpose: This project will develop 40 case studies of ergonomic interventions for older workers employed by small businesses. The case studies will be based on actual workplace assessments. The case studies will quantify risk reduction and job accommodation benefits using cost benefit analysis and increase awareness of workplace health and safety issues related to older workers. The project will provide concrete recommendations concerning ergonomic standards and guidelines for older workers.

The assessments will be done through workplace health and safety committees or worker representatives. Employers will be eligible to receive a small grant to help defray the costs of workplace accommodations recommended by the study.

"The worker injury rate in health care has increased significantly over the past few years and in particular the community health sector. The levels of client care have also increased in the home care setting. We hope to reduce the incidence of repetitive strain injuries among home care workers by education of standard client handling and transfer procedures."

— Bev Wood
Regional Health Authority Central Manitoba Inc.
Home Care Worker Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention Project

Previously Approved Grants

Projects IN PROGRESS

ABORIGINAL SAFETY AND HEALTH AWARENESS INITIATIVE

Agency: ..... Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Inc.
Funding: $94,055

Purpose: This project will identify barriers and hazards to workplace safety in the urban Aboriginal community. It will deliver culturally appropriate workplace safety and health information to urban Aboriginal communities and will be implemented through four facilitators representing a cross-section of the Aboriginal community.

Information on current workplace safety and health issues in selected Aboriginal communities will be compiled. A survey of Aboriginal organizations will be conducted in order to review their health and safety policies and document practices. As well, an Aboriginal Safety and Health Awareness Committee will be set up to provide guidance and direction for a culturally appropriate framework on workplace safety and health.

The project will promote and enhance safety, health and rehabilitation programs in Manitoba workplaces, while enhancing the WCB's understanding of complex workers compensation issues involving Aboriginal workers.

ABORIGINAL WOMEN AND YOUTH IN SAFETY

Agency: ..... Northern Aboriginal Women (Iskwewak)
Funding: $99,660

Purpose: The Northern Aboriginal Women will play a key role in encouraging northern Aboriginal women and youth to work with other northern stakeholders to create awareness of workplace health and safety challenges, create a consensus to deal with those challenges, develop capacities to deal with specific issues, build partnerships, share common experiences and move towards a healthier and safer workforce in northern Manitoba.

A large part of this project's work is focused on community-based workshops and training activities within northern communities.

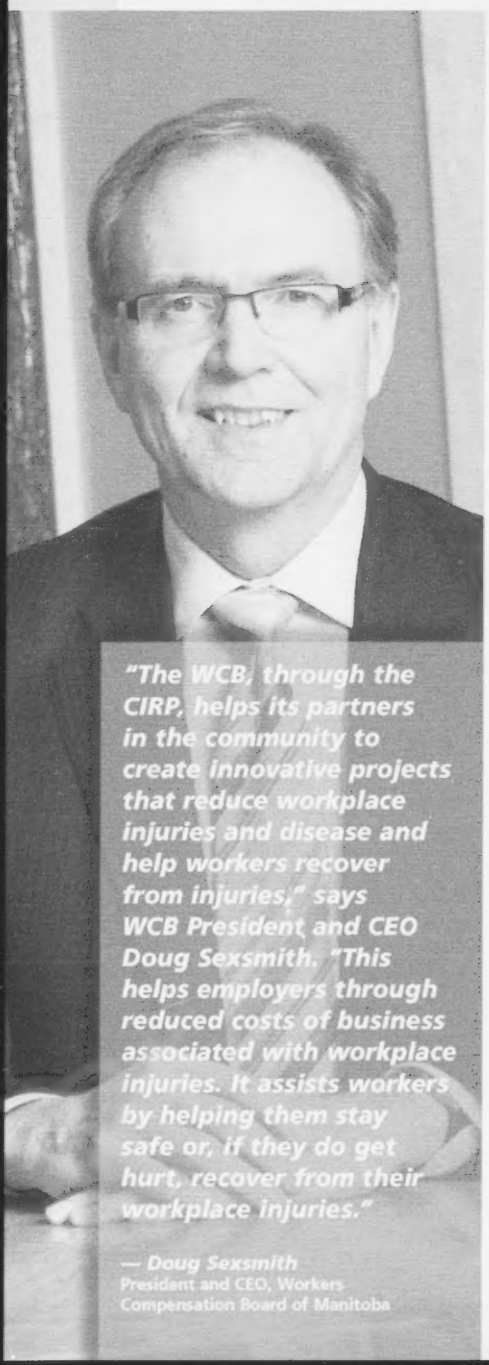
BRAIN TRAINING FOR MEMORY ENHANCEMENT

Agency: ..... Manitoba Brain Injury Association
Funding: $59,460

Purpose: This project will measure the effects of a computerized, cognitive training program on the skills of individuals who have experienced a traumatic brain injury. The software for this project is the Brain Fitness Program 2006, which improves memory, strengthens communication and sharpens thinking.

The project targets individuals who have been unable to return to previous employment because of cognitive changes resulting from their brain injury. The project plans to offer this service to 60 people over 24 months.

The Brain Fitness Program has proven to have immediate effects on cognitive ability. In the long term, the project is anticipated to improve the individual's quality of life and enhance the capacity to return to work.



"The WCB, through the CIRP, helps its partners in the community to create innovative projects that reduce workplace injuries and disease and help workers recover from injuries," says WCB President and CEO Doug Sexsmith. "This helps employers through reduced costs of business associated with workplace injuries. It assists workers by helping them stay safe or, if they do get hurt, recover from their workplace injuries."

— Doug Sexsmith
President and CEO, Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF HEALTH AND SAFETY GROUPS FOR RURAL WORKPLACES IN MANITOBA

Agency: ..... Manitoba Federation of Labour Occupational Health Centre (MFLOHC)
Funding: $173,900

Purpose: The MFLOHC develops and implements Health and Safety Groups in rural Manitoba communities with an emphasis on workplace health, safety and ergonomics. This project provides Health and Safety Groups with resources to undertake self audits of their health and safety program in up to three rural Manitoba communities.

The project is divided into three phases, with work on the project currently at Phase 2:

Phase 1: A model for Health and Safety Groups in rural Manitoba will be developed based on current formal and informal groups, the needs of rural communities and experiences from other groups in and outside of Manitoba. Ergonomic services will also be provided.

Phase 2: Community-based Health and Safety Groups will be organized in up to three rural communities. Each group will be provided with resources and activities to help them develop and become sustainable.

Phase 3: Provide the Health and Safety Groups with resources and training to develop and improve their health and safety program and address their high priority health and safety issues.

EFFECTIVE EARLY RETURN TO WORK: SOLVING THE GAPS IN THE CASE MANAGEMENT FUNCTION

Agency: ..... Brandon Regional Health Authority (BRHA)
Funding: $82,932

Purpose: The BRHA is making innovations to its current return to work program in the development of a proactive approach to disability management through interdisciplinary collaboration and the development of Physical Demands Analysis.

In the short term, the BRHA expects better matching of an employee's physical capabilities with the job requirements, and an enhanced level of awareness and acceptance by all key stakeholders toward early RTW programs. In the long term, the program will be transferable to other healthcare organizations. The BRHA expects reduced disability claims by type, duration and job classification, along with a decrease in compensation costs.

ESTABLISHING OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE LIMITS

Agency: ..... OHG Consulting
Funding: $24,900

Purpose: This project will produce a manual to help workplace safety and health practitioners comply with the Chemical and Biological Substances Regulation of The Workplace Safety and Health Act. This regulation creates threshold limit values (TLVs) that form the basis for specific occupational exposure limits for different workforces and workplaces.

The purpose of the project is to provide an improved understanding of appropriate TLV levels in specific circumstances. Project objectives include:

- Informing safety and health practitioners about the need to adjust TLVs on a regular basis in workplaces with chemical exposures
- Informing management of their regulatory obligations regarding TLV limits
- Informing Joint Health and Safety Committees of their responsibility to identify risks related to TLV exposure
- Posting the guidance manual on a website for easy access and use
- Presenting seminars and workshops to workplaces interested in learning how to comply with the TLV regulation.

In the short term, the project aims to help people in the workplace understand regulatory requirements and prevent over-exposure of workers in workplaces where chemicals are used.

The long term goal is to improve health conditions in the workplace specifically for pregnant women, nursing mothers, older workers and those with specific illnesses.

HEALTH AND SAFETY GAP ANALYSIS – YOUNG MANITOBANS WITH DISABILITIES

Agency: ..... On-Site Safety and Health Management Solutions
Funding: $75,000

Purpose: This project addressed gaps in knowledge and resources available for young Manitobans with disabilities entering the labour force for the first time.

The project conducted a gap analysis to determine:

- What safety related information/training is available and being delivered in Special Education programs throughout Manitoba
- The health and safety needs of employers and agencies that support the training and placement of disabled youth entering the workforce for the first time
- What unique safety issues are faced by employees with disabilities.

The project developed resource material, and delivered training sessions to service providers in order to communicate project outcomes and show how to use the resource material.

INJURED AND DISABLED WORKERS' CENTRE

Agency: ..... Injured Workers Association of Manitoba Inc.
Funding: $102,537

Purpose: The centre provides support to injured workers and their families once their WCB benefits are terminated, or after a decision has been made that an injury is not compensable.

The centre helps injured workers and their families understand, cope and adapt to injuries and post-injury issues. This includes client counseling and referrals to appropriate community programs, as well as help to those who wish to appeal the WCB's decisions by empowering them to present their own appeals.

The centre helps injured workers make informed decisions, take control of their situation and foster a healthier return to work. Ultimately, these services aim to improve an injured worker's sense of healing and self-worth.

LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND LITERACY NEEDS OF WCB CLIENTS

Agency: ..... Prairie Research Associates, Inc.
Funding: $124,906

Purpose: This project will analyze the language, cultural and literacy needs of WCB clients, including both injured workers and employers. The study will develop a demographic profile of WCB clients, assess clients' understanding of the WCB, and determine clients' experiences with the WCB.

This research proposal will involve:

- A mail out questionnaire to 1,500 WCB covered employers and a telephone survey of 1,000 workers who have had a WCB claim in the last two years. The questionnaires will address the demographic profile of firms' employees, accessibility to WCB services and programs and their experiences with the WCB.
- Four focus groups with workers in Winnipeg and two locations in rural Manitoba.

This study will help the WCB better understand the impact of language, culture and literacy on the accessibility of its services and will also identify gaps in the WCB's service delivery.

MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT TO WORKPLACE SAFETY

Agency: ..... Institute for Work and Health, Department of Public Health Services, University of Toronto
Funding: $93,258

Purpose: The Institute for Work and Health (IWH) will study CEO commitment to workplace safety by performing the following:

- A web survey of 150 CEOs in Manitoba
- A safety climate survey of supervisors and leaders in sampled companies
- A safety climate survey of 2,500 front line workers from five firms participating in the CEO survey.

The safety climate surveys will validate the responses from the management survey by obtaining more information from supervisory and line staff on their perception of managerial commitment to safety and health in the presence of operational and financial demands.

A second validation method will involve the analysis of CEO responses to objective safety data, such as record of injuries, injury rates, loss of workdays and safety inspections.

A half-day workshop is proposed once the interim status report is completed to provide feedback and explore the preliminary results.

This study will provide better understanding about:

- How to obtain and enhance senior management's commitment to occupational health and safety in Manitoba
- Factors that drive executive commitment to workplace safety and health.

"It's important to improve understanding of management's role in establishing the health and safety climate within health care organizations and to provide suggestions about how to foster improvements. We will examine administrators' and supervisors' attitudes about the management of health and safety within Manitoba hospitals and major health care centres. Health care providers will also provide their perspectives on the management of health and safety in their health care organizations."

— N. Sue Bruning, Ph.D.
Professor, I.H Asper School of Business
Faculty of Management, University of Manitoba
Managers' and Supervisors' Role in Enhancing the Safety and Health Climate for Health Care Workers

MANAGERS' AND SUPERVISORS' ROLE IN ENHANCING THE SAFETY AND HEALTH CLIMATE FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Agency: ..... Asper School of Business, University of Manitoba
Funding: $53,996

Purpose: This study will improve understanding of management's role in establishing the health and safety climate within healthcare facilities.

This study will involve a multi-perspective survey of the attitudes and perceptions of managers, supervisors and healthcare providers about health and safety in Manitoba healthcare facilities. The survey will target 50 top managers, 200 supervisors and 750 employees from healthcare facilities across Manitoba.

The management/supervisor questionnaire will address health and safety policies, practices, organizational supports and perceptions of the current level of health and safety risks within the facility. The questionnaire for non-supervisory staff will focus on perceptions of management/supervisory support for health and safety, its importance to the organization, perceptions of major health and safety threats, level of group support, health and safety practices, and threats and perceptions of the safety climate of the organization.

In the short term, this project will:

- Identify gaps in the management of health and safety in Manitoba healthcare facilities
- Enhance the understanding of management and supervisor attitudes on the health and safety climate within Manitoba healthcare facilities
- Provide information on healthcare providers' perception of health and safety threats
- Recommend programs within healthcare settings to correct the gaps
- Provide information about healthcare providers' perceptions of management and supervisor support for a positive health and safety environment
- Clarify the relationship between the health and safety climate and injuries and illnesses within healthcare facilities.

In the long term, this project will help to improve the health and safety climate within Manitoba healthcare facilities, improve WCB experience rates within healthcare facilities and help create better safety climates in healthcare facilities.

MANITOBA IMMIGRANTS' SAFETY INITIATIVE (MISI)

Agency: ..... Safety Services Manitoba (SSM)
Funding: $198,700

Purpose: This project intends to prevent workplace-related injury, death and illness for immigrant workers in Manitoba. This project will create and evaluate a prevention program model that will be used to build a sustainable Manitoba Coalition for Immigrant Worker Health and Safety. This coalition will address the unique needs of immigrant workers, their employers and a variety of community stakeholders.

In 2009, workshops and resources will be delivered to immigrant workers and workplaces in Winnipeg and rural areas.

A sustainable coalition will decrease the incidents of workplace injury, disability, illness and death among immigrant workers in Manitoba. For employers, it will result in decreased workplace disruption and financial loss due to workplace-related injuries and illnesses. It also supports the WCB's prevention mandate, resulting in decreased claims and costs.

MINERVA SAFE MANITOBA

Agency: ..... Manitoba Labour and Immigration, Workplace Safety and Health Division (WSHD)
Funding: $50,000

Purpose: The WSHD—through Minerva SAFE Manitoba—provides opportunities for post-secondary institutions to incorporate occupational health and safety into the core curricula of business, engineering and other post-secondary programs. The WSHD is working with rural post-secondary institutions such as Brandon University, Assiniboine Community College and the University College of the North.

The benefits to Manitoba employers are long term, as graduates from the participating post-secondary institutions, future managers, supervisors and workers demonstrate a better understanding of the principles of occupational safety and health.

MODIFIED WORK PRACTICES AND QUALITY OF LIFE OUTCOMES FOR WORK-RELATED MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURIES

Agency: ..... MFL Occupational Health Centre, Inc. (MFLOHC)
Funding: $85,000

Purpose: This project surveys the quality of life (and influencing factors) of workers with musculoskeletal injuries involved in return to work programs. This will help employers develop the most suitable modified work program.

The project has two phases:

In the first phase, a study will be done to compare injured workers who have been in a RTW program with a control group of non-injured workers at the same workplace. The study will survey workers' quality of life, the type of workplace accommodation, the location of injury, the stage of injury and the personal characteristics of the worker.

In the second phase, participating workplaces will be provided with training, advice and preventative measures about ergonomics for injured workers in their RTW programs. As well, a best practices resource guide about accommodating injured workers will be developed.

NINGWANUK MESHQUAJESE WINGS OF CHANGE

Agency: ..... MFL Occupational Health Centre
Funding: $121,236

Purpose: This project will help Workplace Safety and Health committees deal with workplace issues through the use of Sharing Circles. The seven traditional Aboriginal teachings and three workers' safety and health rights will be applied. The project targets workplaces outside of Winnipeg.

This project will create a bridge between Aboriginal culture and Workplace Safety and Health committees. The project seeks to better engage Aboriginal workers with non-Aboriginal workers when dealing with workplace health and safety issues. It will build on the earlier Wings of Change project, which conducted Sharing Circles primarily within Winnipeg and developed Sharing Circle Guides.

In the short term, this project will give many workplaces outside of Winnipeg an opportunity to participate in a program designed to address workplace safety and health within Aboriginal culture.

In the long term, the project will empower a vulnerable group of workers on workplace safety and health using a culturally appropriate approach. In addition, the project hopes to sensitize non-Aboriginal workers to Aboriginal cultures.

SAFE WORK FOR AN AGING WORKFORCE

Agency: ..... Andrew R. Dolhy Ergonomics Consulting
Funding: $32,300

Purpose: This project will help workplaces recognize the effects of different types of work on older workers and their physical and cognitive capabilities in relation to safe work practices. The objectives of this project include:

- Holding a two-day symposium on the aging workforce for academics, health and safety professionals, committee members, managers, supervisors and labour representatives
- Providing ergonomic resources to workplaces that use the action plan to reduce the risk of injury to older workers
- Developing a best practices guide on job accommodations for older workers using information from the action plan created at the symposium, as well as on-site observations.

The symposium has been held. Work on the next two objectives is underway.

The long term benefits from this program will be: increased awareness about the aging workforce, greater consideration to musculoskeletal injuries and the reduction of these injuries among older workers.

WELDING EXPOSURES IN SMALL BUSINESS

Agency: ..... OHG Consulting
Funding: $48,925

Purpose: Welders are exposed to welding fumes which place them at an elevated risk for cancer, kidney disease and lower reproductive capacity. With the assistance of the Canadian Welding Association, this project will measure fume exposure among 200 welders from 40 small welding shops in Winnipeg. The study will:

- Measure the exposure in small businesses which typically have five welders on staff
- Provide each business surveyed with a report on the exposures to their workers and options for corrective action
- Disseminate the findings of the study through a final report and a pamphlet on welding safety.

The study will provide sufficient data to demonstrate to other similar workplaces the magnitude of the hazard. As the sampling data will be immediately compared with legislated health and safety standards, there is likely to be improvement in the workplace.

The project will help reduce occupational cancers and other diseases among welders in Manitoba.

"Older workers may be more susceptible to on-the-job injuries due to perceived and actual declines in physical capacity, however, the risk depends on the task performed and the individual. We hope to assess the risk of injury to older workers in various workplaces and to develop effective solutions."

— Andrew Dolhy
Dolhy Ergonomics Inc.
Safe Work For An Aging Work Force: Small Business Intervention and Evaluation Project

YOUNG WORKERS, LEARNING DISORDERS AND SAFE WORK

Agency: ..... Twin Valley Co-op Ltd.
Funding: $90,000

Purpose: This project targets workers (youth and adults) with learning disabilities who return to work in entry-level positions at the Twin Valley Co-operatives located in Rossburn, Russell, Birtle, Miniota and Elkhorn. This project will develop training tools that can be used by the employer to instill safe work practices and retain workers with learning disabilities. The project will:

- Undertake a job and task analysis for each entry-level job in the food, general merchandise and petroleum departments of the Co-op
- Identify risks and develop training and safety measures
- Create an orientation and safety program for entry-level positions, customized to the specific needs of the target group.

The expertise of the stakeholder group, consisting of teachers, counselors, home economists, occupational therapists and management, will be used in the entry-level job analysis exercise.

In the long term, this project will raise safety awareness among employers hiring workers with learning disabilities. The project will become the catalyst for more work on employing individuals with disabilities, especially in rural communities.

YOUNG WORKER RESPONSES TO WORKPLACE HAZARDS

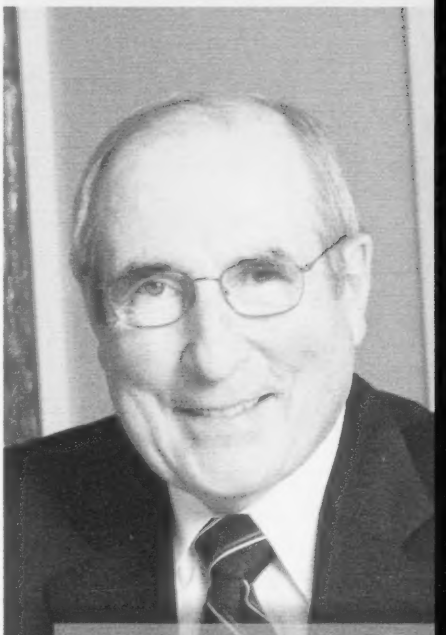
Agency: ..... Asper School of Business, University of Manitoba
Funding: $55,232

Purpose: This project will study the responses of teenaged workers to workplace hazards. It will investigate what factors predict whether young workers will quit hazardous work, speak up about potential hazards, engage in hazardous work out of fear of being disloyal, or ignore potential hazards altogether. The study will also explore the relationship between the different responses and their link to injury exposure.

The study will be undertaken in four stages:

- Focus groups of workers aged 15 to 18 years
- Feedback will be captured about attitudes, emotions, or behaviors in the workplace
- A longitudinal field study will survey 400 employed young people aged 15 to 18 years about their workplace working conditions, incidents or near misses, the behavioral factors in response to workplace hazards, safety training experience, supervision and their commitment to the employer
- Communication of the study results to teenagers, educators, employers and others (these results will be useful for supervisor safety training, safety management and other educational programs promoting safety among young workers).

The study will produce a tool for measuring young worker responses to workplace hazards. This tool will help enhance existing and future educational safety programs resulting in fewer injures and a reduction in long term social and economic costs associated with injuries among young workers.



"Programs like the CIRP provide an important instrument for the WCB's community partners to help reduce the pain and suffering of Manitoba's injured workers and their families. With support from the CIRP, the WCB has promoted a culture that helps keep Manitoba workers safe at work and helps them recover as quickly as possible if they are injured on the job."

— Tom Farrell
Chairperson, Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba

Previously Approved Grants

Projects COMPLETED IN 2008

ABORIGINAL WORKERS EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROJECT

Agency: ..... MFL Occupational Health Centre, Inc.
Funding: $182,870

Purpose: This project equated traditional Aboriginal teachings with workers' rights within the Sharing Circle. The project also provided training sessions to enable others to become Sharing Circle Guides. A Spirit Toolkit is the core support of this work. The Spirit Toolkit includes:

- A fact sheet promoting the program and encouraging a healthy workplace
- A laminated Medicine Wheel Map that depicts the effects of working condition on workers as well as their co-workers, family and community
- Seven Teachings posters
- Medicine Wheel Puzzle
- Indian Act Medicine Wheel Knowledge Game
- The Power of One Storytelling CD.

CAREER PORTFOLIO WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH PROJECT PHASE 2

Agency: ..... Technical and Vocational High School ("Tec Voc")
Funding: $96,000

Purpose: Phase 1 of this project developed a workplace health and safety curriculum, "The Ownership of a Culture – Putting Students First", and integrated it into various programs offered at Tec Voc.

Phase 2 built on the previous phase by:

- Integrating workplace health and safety content into the current Tec-Voc Career Portfolio
- Working with Manitoba High Schools to develop awareness of the need to provide young workers with workplace health and safety information and to make the project's resources available for free.

With the help of this project, high school students will be introduced to the concepts of workplace health and safety.

CRANE AWARENESS COURSE

Agency: ..... Operating Engineers Training Institute of Manitoba Inc.
Funding: $90,000

Purpose: A four-hour Crane Awareness Course was offered to educate and increase the awareness of those who work with or around cranes. Some of the topics covered during the Crane Awareness Course are:

- Basic rigging
- Basic signaling
- Machine types, components and systems
- Personal protective equipment
- Charts
- Conditions and pre-lifts
- Workplace Safety and Health regulations.

A pocket guide for the course has been developed and is provided to all participants for a quick reference when questions arise on the job site.

HOSPITALIZATION IN WINNIPEG DUE TO OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE – PILOT STUDY

Agency: ..... University of Manitoba – Departments of Internal Medicine and Community Health Sciences
Funding: $36,773

Purpose: This pilot studied:

- The extent of occupational exposures to hazardous substances and work conditions among a sample of males admitted to an internal medicine ward at a Winnipeg hospital
- How these exposures may have caused or contributed to the development of the injury/illness
- How these exposures may have contributed to other past health conditions.

A random sample of 297 men between the ages of 18 and 75 were selected for this study and completed an occupational history questionnaire. This information was merged with an inpatient database which contained patient demographics, admission diagnoses and co-morbidity data. A specialist in occupational medicine and internal medicine determined whether the medical conditions the participants had were related to their exposures.

INCREASING LIFE PARTICIPATION WITH APHASIA

Agency: ..... Speechworks
Funding: $66,150

Purpose: This project provided free intervention and treatment for 20 individuals affected by work-related communication disorders. The treatment uses a computer-based intervention called the Lingraphica. People with any type of communication problem, including cognitive or linguistic problems, were eligible to participate. Results have shown the intervention reduces communication impairments and disabilities and increases meaningful participation in life.

INJURED AND DISABLED WORKERS' CENTRE 2007/2008

Agency: ..... Injured Workers Association of Manitoba Inc.
Funding: $100,481

Purpose: This centre provides support to injured workers and their families once their WCB benefits are terminated, or after a decision is made that an injury is not compensable.

The centre helps injured workers and their families understand, cope and adapt to injuries and post-injury issues. This includes client counseling and referrals to appropriate community programs, as well as help to those who wish to appeal the WCB's decisions by empowering them to present their own appeals.

The centre helps injured workers make informed decisions, take control of their situation and foster a healthier return to work. Ultimately, these services aim to improve an injured worker's sense of healing and self-worth. The centre also received a grant for the 2008/2009 year.

PEGUIS SAFE WORK PROGRAM

Agency: ..... Peguis First Nation
Funding: $175,000

Purpose: The objective of this project was to increase workplace health and safety awareness in the Peguis community by focusing on working conditions, current work practices and the knowledge of safe work practices within the community.

The goals of the project were completed through the following activities:

1. A community wide workplace safety assessment of public and private activities and businesses, as well as the 'traditional" Peguis First Nation occupations such as fishing and trapping
2. The use of the assessment results to build a workplace safety database that will describe standard methods of working safe and to develop educational safety lessons, seminars and workshops
3. Delivery of workplace safety and health lessons to 200 Senior 1 to 4 students
4. Delivery of workplace safety seminars/presentations to all Peguis organizations and businesses numbering approximately 150
5. Delivery of presentations/workshops to the community at large numbering approximately 3000 people.

SAFE WORKERS OF TOMORROW HEALTH AND SAFETY 2007/2008 PROGRAM

Agency: ..... Workers of Tomorrow Safety Centre Inc.
Funding: $153,276

Purpose: This program's primary focus is to educate students and young workers on their rights as Manitoba workers and to help them prevent workplace injuries and illnesses by assessing risk and recognizing hazards. Numerous presentations and training programs will be made to high school students by a volunteer speakers' bureau consisting of health and safety experts and young workers who have experienced workplace injuries.

SAFE WORK
SPOT THE HAZARD
ASSESS THE RISK
FIND A SAFER WAY
EVERYDAY

SEEING THE WORKPLACE WITH "NEW EYES"

Agency: ..... Dorothy Wigmore
Funding: $133,900

Purpose: This project developed a resource for workplace health and safety committees called "A Guide for Joint Health and Safety Committees and Workplace Health and Safety Representatives" that will help such committees prevent workplace injuries and illnesses. Project staff worked with a Manitoba workplace to develop the resource and to assist the workplace to further develop an effective health and safety program.

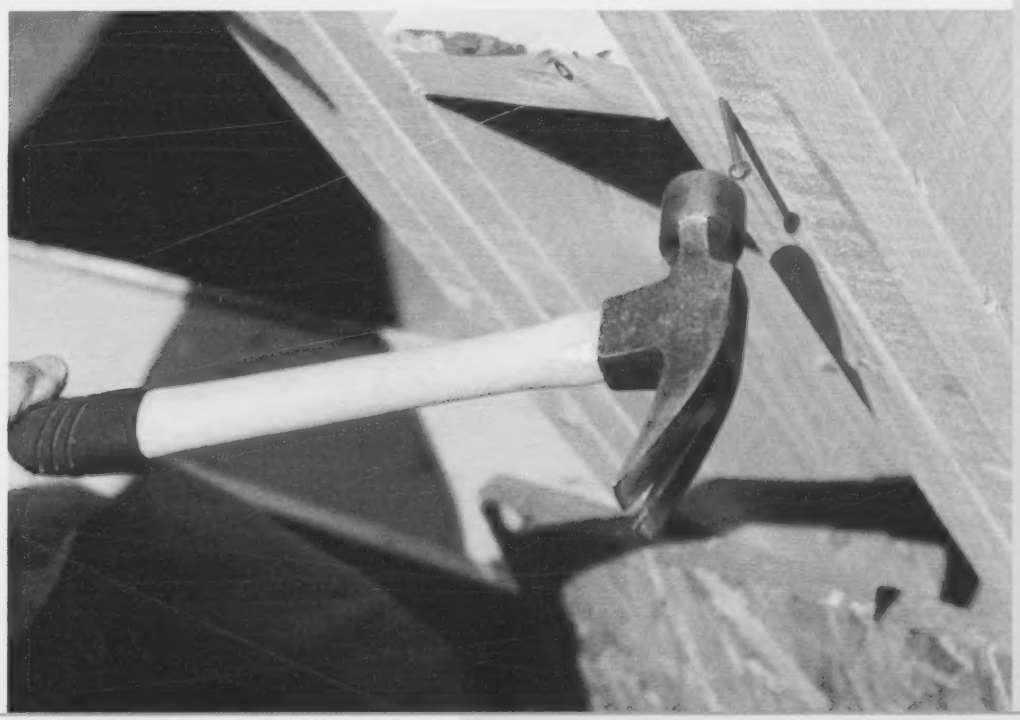
WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY STRATEGY FOR COMMUNITY-BASED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN NORTHERN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Agency: ..... Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation(NCN)/InterGroup Consultants Ltd.
Funding: $148,919

Purpose: The first stage of this project identified and prioritized community needs in order to address workplace health and safety issues at Northern Aboriginal construction projects. To assess current health and safety practices, construction in Nelson House was studied. Some of the findings concluded that:

- There is a lack of funds for contractors to implement a formal workplace health and safety program
- Injuries were not always reported due to concerns by workers that it could impact their job
- More culturally appropriate education training strategies are required
- Improving workplace health and safety needs to begin with NCN leadership.

A workplace safety needs assessment workbook was developed to explain the process for assessing workplace health and safety to other aboriginal communities. As well, sharing circles were used to encourage individuals to share their knowledge and perspectives regarding health and safety at construction projects.



SAFE Work – A Way of Life

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For copies of completed reports, including those completed before 2008, contact Bruce Cielen, Manager, Research and Workplace Innovation Program, at **bcielen@wcb.mb.ca**, **(204) 954-4650** or toll-free outside Winnipeg at **1-800-362-3340**, extension **4650**. Please visit the WCB website at www.wcb.mb.ca for more information on the Research and Workplace Innovation Program.

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